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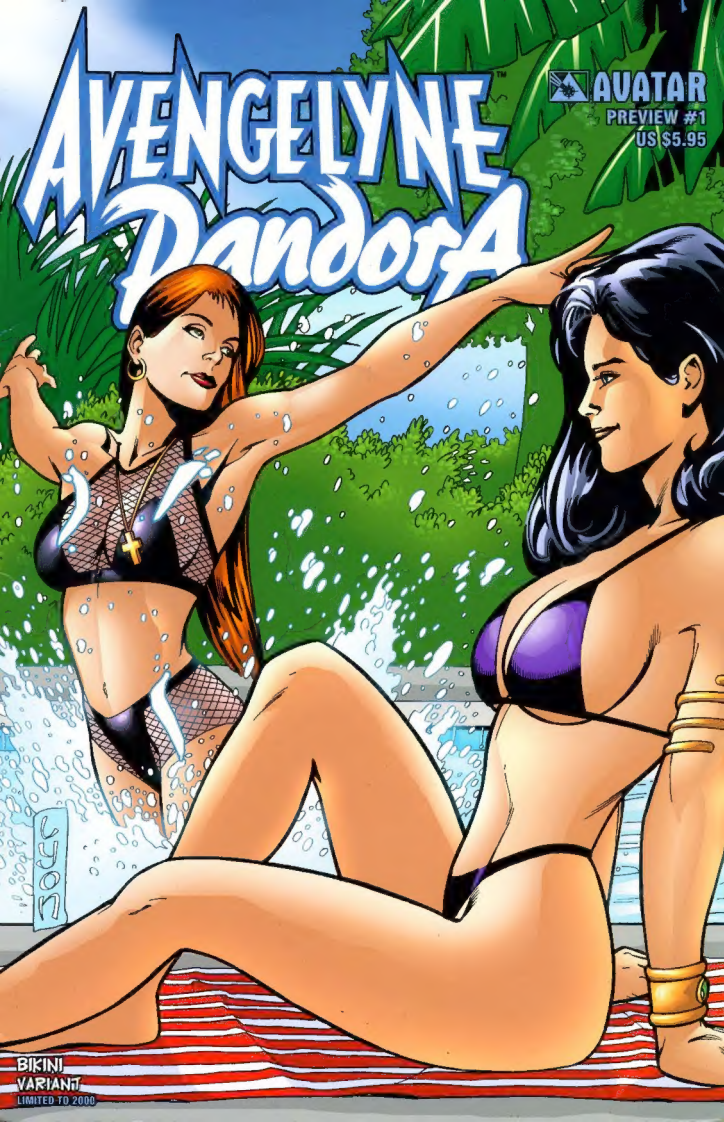
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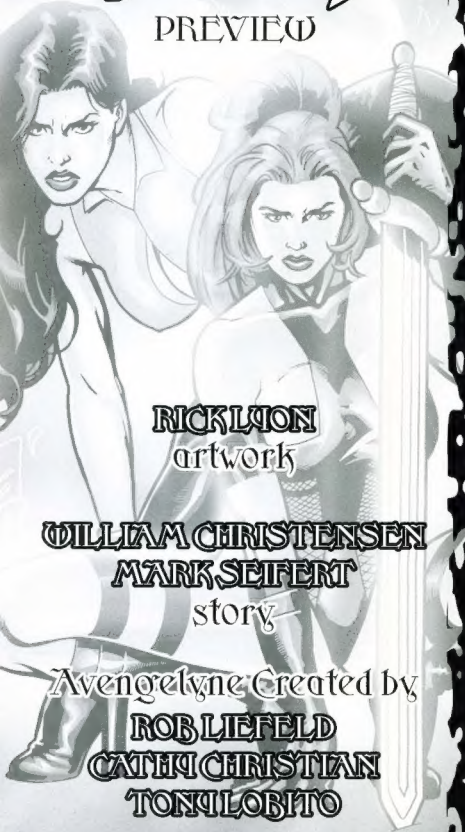

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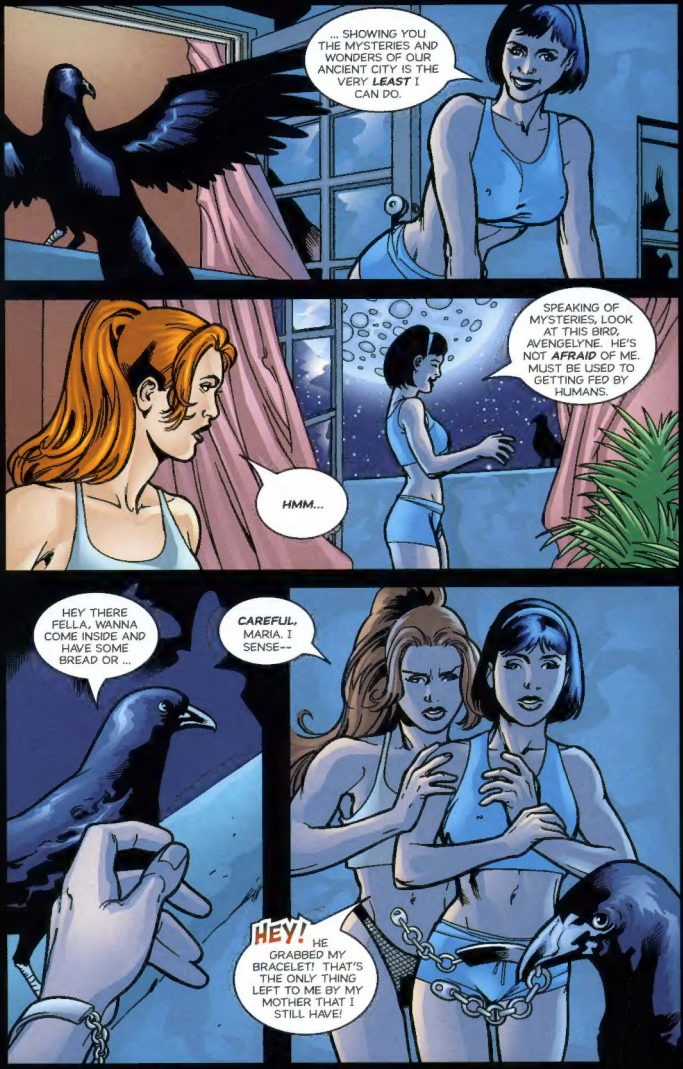
THANKS SO MUCH FOR LETTING ME SLEEP HERE, **MARIA.** I WOULD HAVE STAYED OUT WITH THE OTHERS...
...BUT I MUST ADMIT, THE **CITY** AND ITS **PEOPLE** INTEREST ME AS MUCH AS THAT **OLD CHURCH** DOES.
MEXICO CITY DOES HAVE ITS CHARMS. SEVENTEEN MILLION PEOPLE... THE MOST POPULOUS METROPOLITAN AREA IN THE WORLD.
AVENGELYNE, WITH ALL THE HELP YOU'RE GIVING US WITH THE **CHURCH RESTORATION PROJECT...**

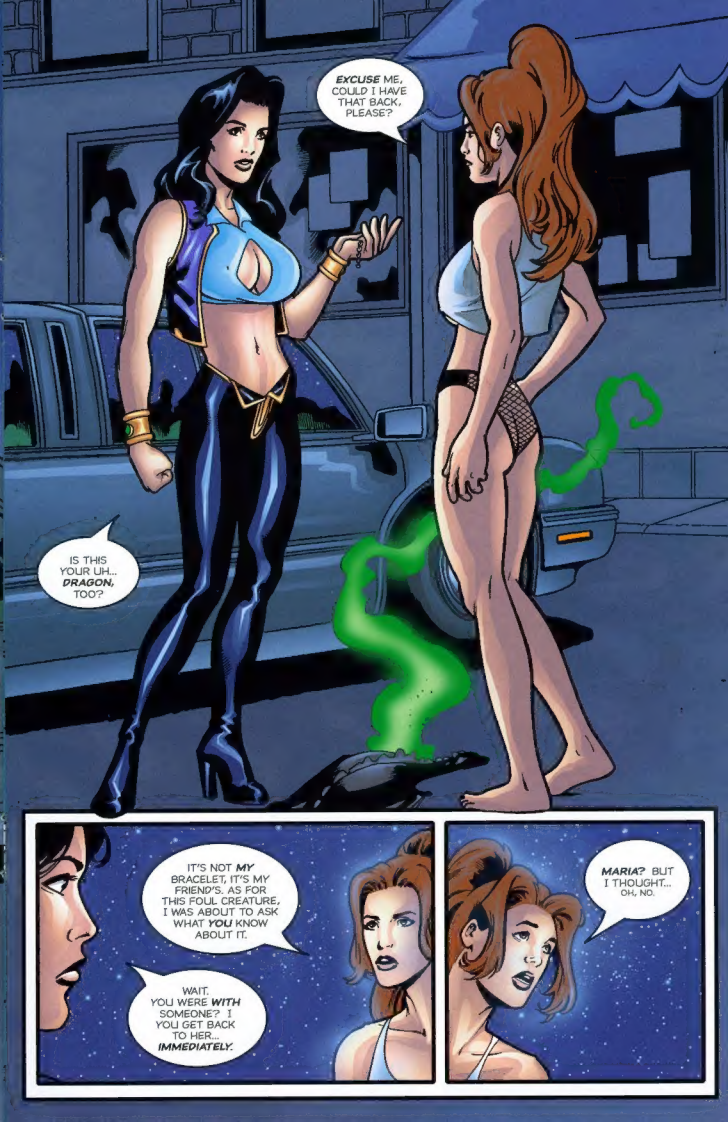

... SHOWING YOU THE MYSTERIES AND WONDERS OF OUR ANCIENT CITY IS THE VERY *LEAST* I CAN DO.
SPEAKING OF MYSTERIES, LOOK AT THIS BIRD, AVENGELYNE. HE'S NOT *AFRAID* OF ME. MUST BE USED TO GETTING FED BY HUMANS.
HMM...
HEY THERE FELLA, WANNA COME INSIDE AND HAVE SOME BREAD OR ...
CAREFUL, MARIA. I SENSE--
HEY! HE GRABBED MY BRACELET! THAT'S THE ONLY THING LEFT TO ME BY MY MOTHER THAT I STILL HAVE!

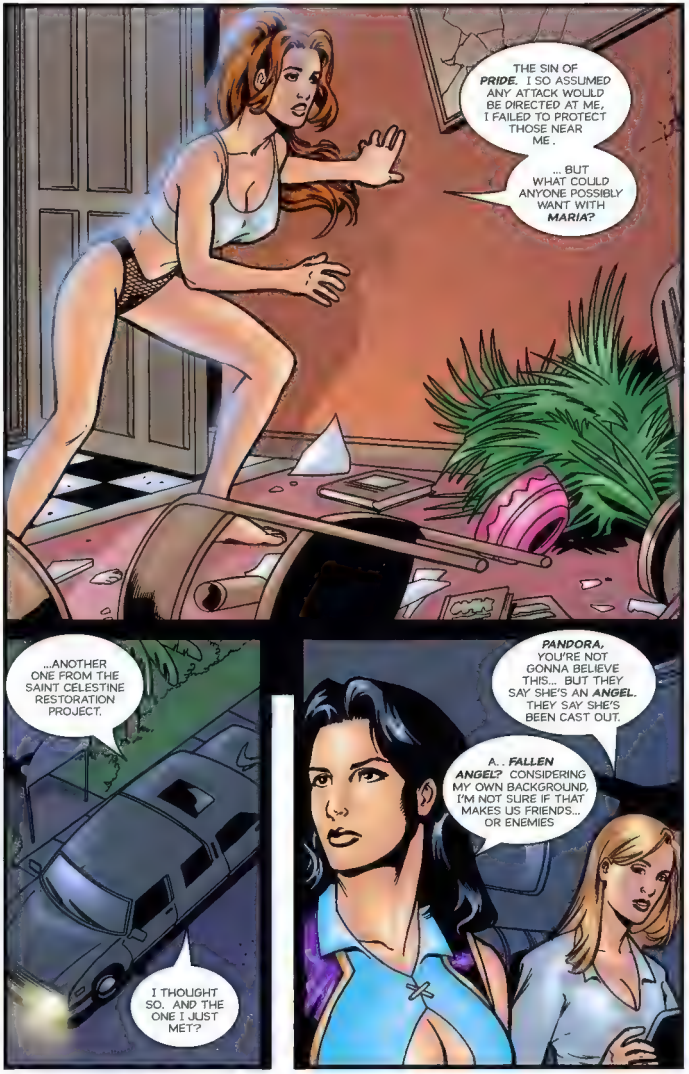
I'LL GET YOUR BRACELET BACK, MARIA...
... I WANT TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THIS "BIRD" ANYWAY!

SQUARK
MARIA
GOT YOU.
NOW, LITTLE BIRD... WHY DO I SENSE A STRANGENESS ABOUT--
!?
WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME!?
SKREEK

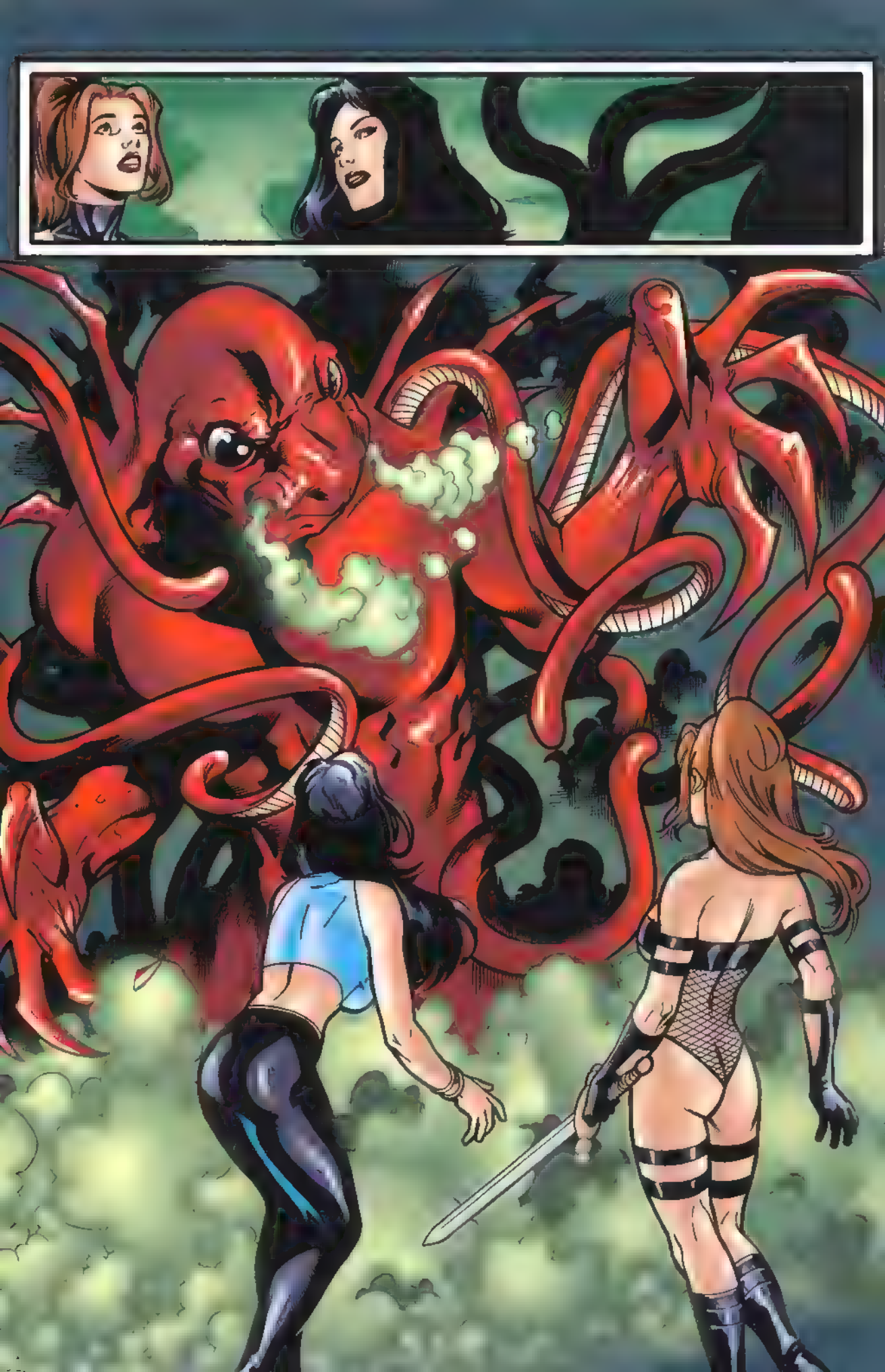
NO, YOU HAVE **NOTHING** TO DO WITH **HEAVEN**, DO YOU LITTLE CREATURE? BUT YOU'RE NO DEMON EITHER... SO WHAT ARE YOU?
THIS WOULD BE MUCH EASIER IF I STILL HAD **WINGS**, BUT I'VE GOT TO TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT THAT **DRAGON THING** IS.

SQUEE
HMM... YOU SHOULD BE BACK IN ***THE BOX*** BY NOW.
THAT'S THE EFFECT THE DAGGER ***HOPE*** HAS ON ***TRUE*** DEMONS.
SO ***WHAT*** IS GOING ON HERE?


EXCUSE ME, COULD I HAVE THAT BACK, PLEASE?
IS THIS YOUR UH.. DRAGON, TOO?
IT'S NOT MY BRACELET, IT'S MY FRIEND'S. AS FOR THIS FOUL CREATURE, I WAS ABOUT TO ASK WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT IT.
WAIT. YOU WERE WITH SOMEONE? I YOU GET BACK TO HER... IMMEDIATELY.
MARIA? BUT I THOUGHT...
OH, NO.


THE SIN OF PRIDE. I SO ASSUMED ANY ATTACK WOULD BE DIRECTED AT ME, I FAILED TO PROTECT THOSE NEAR ME.
... BUT WHAT COULD ANYONE POSSIBLY WANT WITH MARIA?
...ANOTHER ONE FROM THE SAINT CELESTINE RESTORATION PROJECT.
I THOUGHT SO. AND THE ONE I JUST MET?
PANDORA, YOU'RE NOT GONNA BELIEVE THIS... BUT THEY SAY SHE'S AN ANGEL. THEY SAY SHE'S BEEN CAST OUT.
A.. FALLEN ANGEL? CONSIDERING MY OWN BACKGROUND, I'M NOT SURE IF THAT MAKES US FRIENDS... OR ENEMIES

AVENGELYNE PandorA



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MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
IS THIS MY FATE, FATHER?
FOR EVIL TO FOLLOW ME WHEREVER I GO? AS A REMINDER THAT I TOO HAVE FALLEN?
IF SO, I ACCEPT THAT FATE BUT PLEASE
GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO PROTECT MY FRIENDS FROM THE SINS THAT FOLLOW ME *
*SEE AVENGELYNE/PANDORA PREVIEW FOR THE FATE OF AVENGELYNE'S FRIEND MARIA

YOU'RE FOLLOWING ME BECAUSE YOU SEE SOME KIND OF MARK ON ME!?
I DON'T GET IT. YOU'RE SOME KIND OF SLASHER, OR..
NO.
I'M AFRAID I'M SOMETHING MUCH WORSE.
AND THE DAGGER HOPE WILL DO MORE THAN PIERCE YOUR FLESH...

IT WILL --
IT WILL DO ***NOTHING***, WOMAN!
I WILL NOT STAND BY AND LET YOU HARM AN INNOCENT!
AVENGELYNE, WAIT . WE'VE GOT TO--
YOU WON'T ***TALK*** YOUR WAY OUT OF A CONFRONTATION THIS TIME
NOW TELL ME WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH MY FRIEND ***MARIA***, OR ---
WE DON'T HAVE ***TIME*** FOR THIS, ANGEL.

BECAUSE THE INNOCENT YOU ARE HERE TO PROTECT HAS BEEN INFECTED...
..BY A KIND OF EVIL WE ARE BOTH ALL TOO FAMILIAR WITH

UFF!
VWOOSH!
INFECTED?
I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND
YOU MEAN SHE'S POSSESSED BY SOME DEMON?

NOT QUITE.
MY DAGGER SENDS DEMONS BACK WHERE THEY CAME FROM
BUT IT HAS LITTLE EFFECT ON THESE CREATURES ONCE THEY GROW TOO STRONG
IT'S CLEAR THEY ARE RELATED TO DEMONS SOMEHOW
BUT IN SOME WAYS
KTHUNK!
THEY'RE FLESH AND BLOOD, TOO
I SEE YOUR POINT
SO

..WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THIS POOR WOMAN?
WE'RE HOPING YOUR FRIEND MARIA CAN TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON
WE FOUND HER WANDERING THE STREETS HOURS AFTER YOU AND I MET. SHE'S FIGHTING THE CHANGE BETTER THAN MOST
YOU SEE AVENGELYNE, WE DISCOVERED THAT MANY OF THOSE INFECTED HAVE SOME CONNECTION WITH THE SAINT CELESTINE CHURCH RESTORATION PROJECT
AND AS LEADER OF THAT PROJECT, I KNOW MORE ABOUT IT THAN ANYONE
THAT'S WHY THEY TOOK ME
YES PANDORA, I CAN TELL YOU WHAT'S GOING ON..

BUT YOU'VE GOT TO KEEP AVENGELYNE AWAY FROM ME!
MARIA!? BUT WHY--
!?
I HAVE LITTLE TIME PANDORA, LISTEN CAREFULLY.
THE CHURCH I WAS RESTORING, SAINT CELESTINE'S... IT'S HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD.
AND IT'S GOT A HISTORY NO ONE LIVING REMEMBERS.

CENTURIES AGO, THIS AREA WAS PLAGUED BY A... WELL, WE'D CALL THEM A CULT NOW
AND THIS GROUP WAS SO DANGEROUS...
...AND *POWERFUL* THAT AN ANGEL WAS SENT TO STOP THEM
A *WARRIOR ANGEL* MUCH LIKE AVENGELYNE.

SHE DID STOP THEM, AND SHE DISCOVERED THE SOURCE OF THEIR POWER
A SMALL QUANTITY OF THE BLOOD OF THE DRAGON
THAT'S RIGHT, THE BLOOD OF LUCIFER HIMSELF!
IT WAS GIVEN TO A SECT OF THE CHURCH ELDERS FOR SAFEKEEPING, FOR SUCH A THING COULD NEVER ENTER HEAVEN
EXCAVATING LOWER LEVELS OF THE CHURCH, WE DISCOVERED IT THERE IN A SEALED-OFF SECTION OF ROOMS
AND THOSE WHO COME INTO CONTACT WITH THIS BLOOD
BECOME NOT DEMONS...
NOT HUMAN.

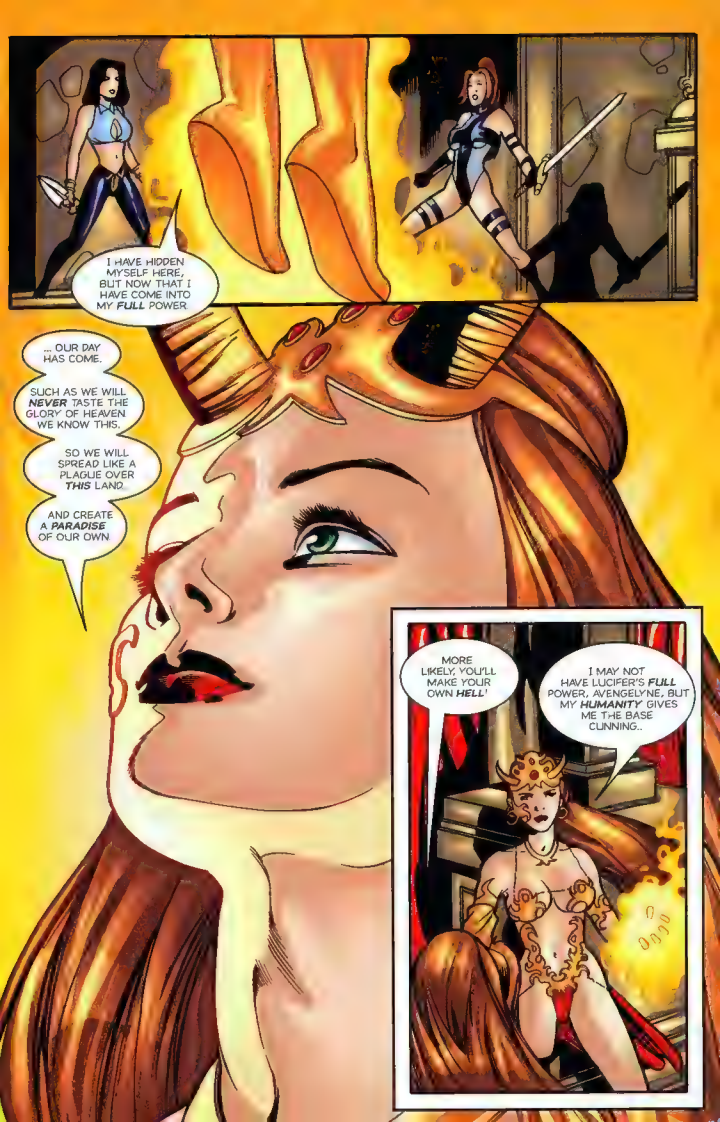
BUT KIND OF LIKE A HYBRID, I GUESS
THE FIRST GIRL INFECTED, THE HOST, IS
IS .
SOMETHING WRONG, MARIA?
NOTHING THAT YOUR DESTRUCTION WON'T CURE, ANGEL!
THE INFECTION HAS TAKEN HOLD!
THERE'S NO CURING IT NOW

I'M AFRAID I HAVE THE ONLY CURE RIGHT HERE
I'M SORRY AVENGELYNE.
BUT IF I DON'T ACT QUICKLY, IT WILL ONLY GET WORSE.
I KNOW.
AND I THINK IT'S TIME WE TRACE THIS BLOOD.

BACK TO THE SOURCE
SO YOU SEE FATHER, IT'S VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE KNOW..
... EXACTLY **WHERE** THE RESTORATION STAFF WAS LAST WORKING
I'M HAPPY TO HELP OF COURSE, BUT IF SOMETHING LIKE THAT WAS STILL GOING ON HERE..

I THINK I'D HAVE NOTICED
I DON'T SENSE ANYTHING EITHER.
ARE WE ON THE WRONG TRACK?
WELL, IF THAT MYSTERIOUS HOST THAT MARIA MENTIONED IS STILL HERE, THERE SHOULD BE SOME SIGN OF HER OR--
FIRE OF THE GODS!
FIRES OF HELL, YOU MEAN!
VWOOM!

YOU ARE BOTH CORRECT, WARRIORS. I AM A CREATURE OF GOD AND MAN.
A MERE FRACTION OF THE POWER OF LUCIFER CONTAINED IN A HUMAN SHELL.
I AM THE FIRST, THE ORIGINAL HOST VESSEL FOR LUCIFER'S BLOOD.
BUT SOON... VERY SOON, THERE WILL BE LEGIONS OF US.


I HAVE HIDDEN MYSELF HERE, BUT NOW THAT I HAVE COME INTO MY FULL POWER
... OUR DAY HAS COME.
SUCH AS WE WILL NEVER TASTE THE GLORY OF HEAVEN WE KNOW THIS.
SO WE WILL SPREAD LIKE A PLAGUE OVER THIS LAND.
AND CREATE A PARADISE OF OUR OWN.
MORE LIKELY, YOU'LL MAKE YOUR OWN HELL!
I MAY NOT HAVE LUCIFER'S FULL POWER, AVENGELYNE, BUT MY HUMANITY GIVES ME THE BASE CUNNING..

...TO WIELD IT IN WAYS THAT THE PRIDEFUL ONE NEVER *DREAMED OF!*
AAAHH!

YOU SEEM FULL OF PRIDE YOURSELF, WOMAN
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE HERE WITH POWER
DEMON OR HUMAN, I HAVE THE MEANS TO STRIKE YOU DOWN!
OH, PANDORA
IF YOU WOULD GIVE IN TO YOUR TRUE NATURE LIKE I HAVE, YOU WOULD KNOW THE MEANING OF REAL POWER
WHUFF!

BUT AS IT IS, YOU'RE JUST PATHETIC AND WEAK. *BOTH* OF YOU
WARRIORS WITH SOME BLIND FAITH IN A WORLD THAT HAS LONG SINCE ACCEPTED IT'S TRUE NATURE LIKE I HAVE.
THERE'S ONLY *ONE* WHO CAN STOP ME NOW. AND *HE* ISN'T HERE.
NO.
YOU'RE WRONG
FOOLISH GIRL. YOUR PITIFUL WEAPON CAN'T WOUND ME NOW
WRONG ON BOTH COUNTS

BUT IT CAN WOUND ME.
NO!
BUT HOW DID YOU--
I FINALLY FIGURED OUT WHY MARIA FEARED ME JUST BEFORE SHE BECAME A MINDLESS MONSTER.
BECAUSE AT THAT LAST INSTANT, SHE INSTINCTIVELY KNEW THAT I HAVE A GREATER POWER INSIDE ME, JUST LIKE YOU DO. A POWER THAT COULD DESTROY HER

BECAUSE THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB WILL *ALWAYS* VANQUISH THE BLOOD OF THE DRAGON!

FIRE OF THE GODS! YOUR BLOOD IS A POTENT WEAPON INDEED.
YES, SHE SCOFFED AT OUR POWER AND OUR FAITH, AND SHE WAS WRONG ON BOTH COUNTS.
WE OBVIOUSLY HAD THE POWER TO DEFEAT HER...
... AND THROUGH THE CENTURIES, IT'S BEEN OUR FAITH THAT'S KEPT US ***FIGHTING*** THIS NEVER-ENDING BATTLE.
IT ONLY ***SEEMS*** NEVER-ENDING, PANDORA.
I ASSURE YOU, IT ONLY SEEMS THAT WAY.

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